

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for retrieving documents in a computer network, the method comprising:
  - receiving an indication of a document selection performed by a user, the document selection identifying a desired file reference contained within a document displayed to the user;
  - in response to receiving the indication of the document selection, displaying to the user a list of one or more selectable data exchange modes;
  - determining a data exchange mode selected by the user for the desired file reference; and
  - ensuring that a request to retrieve data associated with the desired file reference from a server is in accordance with the selected data exchange mode.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein said ensuring further comprises:
  - modifying one or more configuration parameters of an Internet browser in accordance with the selected data exchange mode; and
  - restoring the one or more configuration parameters of the Internet browser upon processing the request for data associated with the desired file reference.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein said ensuring further comprises:

2 modifying the request issued by an Internet browser in accordance with the  
3 data exchange mode selected by the user.

1 4. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

2 in response to receiving the indication of the document selection, associating a  
3 previously identified preferred data exchange mode with the desired file reference  
4 unless detecting that the user has performed an action sequence indicating a user  
5 selection of a data exchange mode other than the previously identified preferred data  
6 exchange mode.

1 5. The method of claim 4 wherein the action sequence indicating the user  
2 selection of the data exchange mode other than the preferred data exchange mode  
3 includes a user interaction with any one of a cursor control device and a keyboard  
4 key.

1 6. The method of claim 1 wherein the user selection of the data exchange mode  
2 affects only the data associated with the desired file reference.

1 7. The method of claim 1 wherein the selected data exchange mode affects any  
2 one of the amount of user-specific information sent with the request, the amount of  
3 data sent by the server in response to the request, and the format of data sent by the  
4 server in response to the request.

1 8. The method of claim 1 wherein the server is a network server storing the data  
2 associated with the desired file reference.

1 9. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
2 the server is a proxy that communicates with a network server storing the data  
3 associated with the desired file reference; and  
4 said ensuring further comprises the proxy modifying the request for  
5 data when required by the selected data exchange mode, and the proxy  
6 modifying data received from the network server when required by the  
7 selected data exchange mode.

1 10. The method of claim 9 wherein the request for data sent to the proxy contains  
2 an identifier of the selected data exchange mode.

1 11. The method of claim 1 wherein said ensuring further comprises:  
2 sending a request to retrieve data associated with the desired file reference to  
3 a first server, the request conforming to the selected data exchange mode;  
4 receiving a response from the first server, the response indicating a new  
5 location of the data associated with the desired file reference; and  
6 automatically issuing a second request to a second server using the new  
7 location, the second request conforming to the selected data exchange mode.

1 12. The method of claim 1 wherein:

2 data associated with the desired file reference is stored on a plurality of  
3 servers; and

4 said ensuring further comprises sending a request to each of the plurality of  
5 servers, the request conforming to the selected data exchange mode.

1 13. The method of claim 1 wherein said ensuring further comprises:

2 including an identifier of the selected data exchange mode; and

3 sending the request with the identifier of the selected data exchange mode to a  
4 first proxy.

1 14. The method of claim 13 further comprising:

2 the first proxy selecting a second proxy as a recipient of the request based on  
3 the identifier of the selected data exchange mode and a predefined set of operations  
4 performed by the second proxy.

1 15. The method of claim 13 further comprising:

2 the first proxy taking responsibility for performing a first portion of  
3 operations required by the selected data exchange mode; and

4 the first proxy selecting a second proxy for performing a second portion of  
5 operations required by the selected data exchange mode.

1 16. The method of claim 15 further comprising:  
2 the first proxy updating the identifier of the data exchange mode with an  
3 identifier value associated with the second portion of operations; and  
4 the first proxy sending the request with the updated identifier value to the  
5 second proxy.

1 17. A method for retrieving documents in a computer network, the method  
2 comprising:  
3 receiving an indication of a data exchange mode chosen by a user for a desired  
4 file reference;  
5 determining, based on the data exchange mode, whether data associated with  
6 the desired file reference should be retrieved directly from a destination network  
7 server storing the data; and  
8 when the data should not be retrieved directly from the destination server,  
9 directing a request for data to a proxy for a modification in accordance with the data  
10 exchange mode.

1 18. The method of claim 17 wherein the modification in accordance with the data  
2 exchange mode affects any one of the amount of user-specific information sent with  
3 the request, the amount of data sent by the server in response to the request, and the  
4 format of data sent by the server in response to the request

1 19. The method of claim 17 wherein the data should not be retrieved directly from  
2 the destination server if the data exchange mode requires modifying either the  
3 request for data or the data retrieved from the destination server.

1 20. The method of claim 17 further comprising:  
2 the proxy sending the request to the destination network server, the request  
3 conforming to the data exchange mode;  
4 the proxy receiving the data associated with the desired file reference from the  
5 destination computer; and  
6 the proxy modifying the data when required by the data exchange mode.

1 21. The method of claim 17 wherein directing the request for data to the proxy  
2 further comprises:  
3 identifying one of a plurality of proxies as a recipient of the request; and  
4 sending the request to said one of the plurality of proxies.

1 22. The method of claim 21 wherein:  
2 at least one of the plurality of proxies performs a predefined set of operations;  
3 and  
4 said identifying is based on the predefined set of operations and the data  
5 exchange mode.

1 23. The method of claim 17 further comprising:  
2 adding additional information to the request sent to at least one of the  
3 plurality of proxies, the additional information including an identifier of the data  
4 exchange mode.

1 24. A system for retrieving documents in a computer network, the system  
2 comprising:  
3 a data exchange mode identifier to receive an indication of a document  
4 selection performed by a user, the document selection identifying a desired file  
5 reference contained within a document displayed to the user, and to determine a  
6 data exchange mode selected by the user for the desired file reference; and  
7 a request modifier to ensure that a request to retrieve data associated with the  
8 desired file reference from a server is in accordance with the selected data exchange  
9 mode.

1 25. The system of claim 24 wherein determination of the data exchange mode  
2 remains valid only for the data associated with the desired file reference, and is  
3 updated after receiving indication of the next document selection by the user.

1 26. A system for retrieving documents in a computer network, the system  
2 comprising:

1 a data exchange mode identifier to receive an indication of a data exchange  
2 mode chosen by a user for a desired file reference; and  
3 a destination coordinator to determine, based on the data exchange mode,  
4 whether data associated with the desired file reference should be retrieved directly  
5 from a destination network server storing the data, and to direct a request for data to  
6 a proxy when the data should not be retrieved directly from the destination server.

1 27. The system of claim 26 wherein data exchange mode used by the destination  
2 coordinator remains valid only for the data associated with the desired file reference,  
3 and is updated for the next desired file reference.

1 28. A computer readable medium that provides instructions, which when  
2 executed on a processor, cause said processor to perform operations comprising:  
3 receiving an indication of a document selection performed by a user, the  
4 document selection identifying a desired file reference contained within a document  
5 displayed to the user;  
6 in response to receiving the indication of the document selection, displaying to  
7 the user a list of one or more selectable data exchange modes;  
8 determining a data exchange mode selected by the user for the desired file  
9 reference; and  
10 ensuring that a request to retrieve data associated with the desired file  
11 reference from a server is in accordance with the selected data exchange mode.



1 29. A computer readable medium that provides instructions, which when  
2 executed on a processor, cause said processor to perform operations comprising:  
3 receiving an indication of a data exchange mode chosen by a user for a desired  
4 file reference;  
5 determining, based on the data exchange mode, whether data associated with  
6 the desired file reference should be retrieved directly from a destination network  
7 server storing the data; and  
8 when the data should not be retrieved directly from the destination server,  
9 directing a request for data to a proxy for a modification in accordance with the data  
10 exchange mode.